

Message Text

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ACTION ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 AID-05 OMB-01

TRSE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 AGRE-00 EB-08

COME-00 OES-06 IGA-02 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 L-03

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EUR-12

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R 221530Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5710

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

USMISSION GENEVA

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TAGS: SREF, EAID, MZ, US

SUBJECT: ZIMBABWE REFUGEES IN MOZAMBIQUE: COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

REF: A. MAPUTO 099, B. MAPUTO 0425

1. SUMMARY: UNHCR REP. DE MELO'S ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION (REFTEL) AT ZIMBABWEAN REFUGEE CAMPS CONFIRMS WHAT WE HAVE HEARD FROM AT LEAST THREE OTHER SOURCES WHO HAVE VISITED REFUGEE CAMPS IN RECENT WEEKS. THE OTHER SOURCES GIVE EVEN GLOOMIER PICTURE OF SITUATION AT DOROI. EM-BASSY RECOMMENDS THAT DEPARTMENT GIVE URGENT CONSIDERATION TO AUGMENTING ITS CONTRIBUTION TO UNHCR FOR AID FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ZIMBABWEAN REFUGEES IN MOZAMBIQUE AND EXPLORE FEASIBILITY OF A DIRECT PL480 TITLE II EMERGENCY FOOD AID CONTRIBUTION.
END SUMMARY

2. UNHCR REP SERGIO DE MELO'S EVALUATION OF THE SITUATION PREVAILING AT THE ZIMBABWEAN REFUGEE CAMPS PARALLELS

WHAT EMBASSY HAS HEARD FROM (A) CARL TIPPENHAUER, WFP REP, AND YVES EPLLE, UNICEF REP, WHO VISITED CAMPS WITH DE MELO, (B) NEWSWEEK'S NAIROBI BUREAU CHIEF JAMES PRINGLE WHO VISITED THREE CAMPS IN LATE MARCH. OTHER SOURCES, HOWEVER, GAVE MUCH GLOOMIER PICTURE OF DOROI AND WERE MORE OPEN IN THEIR CRITICISM OF MALADMINISTRATION OF CAMPS BY MOZAMBIQUE AUTHORITIES. FOLLOWING IS WHAT WE HAVE HEARD FROM THESE SOURCES:

3. WFP AND UNICEF REPS: TIPPENHAUER DESCRIBED SITUATION AT DOROI AS "APPALLING" AND "HORRIBLE," AND SAID THAT CAMP WAS IN NEED OF QUICK INFUSION OF FOOD AND HEALTH SUPPLIES. DOROI HAD NO HEALTH SUPPLIES AND WFP AND SWEDISH-DONATED FOOD, PRINCIPALLY DRIED SKIM MILK AND DRIED FISH, HAD NOT REACHED CAMPS. HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER FOOD HAD BEEN INTENTIONALLY DIVERTED TO MEET MOZAMBIQUE'S INTERNAL DOMESTIC NEEDS OR WHETHER DISTRIBUTION PROBLEMS WERE CAUSE OF FOOD NOT REACHING CAMP. TIPPENHAUER ALSO REPORTED THAT APPROXIMATELY 17 PEOPLE HAD DIED FROM UNEXPLAINED FOOD-RELATED ILLNESSES WEEK BEFORE UN TEAM VISITED CAMP. WFP REP'S VIEWS OF OTHER TWO CAMPS WERE SIMILAR TO DE MELO'S: BOTH CAMPS NEED MORE HEALTH SUPPLIES AND GREATER VARIETY OF FOOD. PELLE FOCUSED HIS COMMENTS ON THE HEALTH AND SANITARY CONDITIONS IN THE CAMPS. IN THESE AREAS, HE CHARACTERIZED THE NEEDS OF DOROI AND TRONGA AS "ENORMOUS." BOTH CAMPS REQUIRED MORE MEDICAL SUPPLIES OF ALL TYPES, SKILLED MEDICAL PERSONNEL AND LARGER WATER FILTRATION AND DISTRIBUTION UNITS TO ENSURE ADEQUATE SUPPLIES OF SAFE WATER. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PELLE SAID THAT DESPITE ITS BEST EFFORTS, THE MOZAMBIQUE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT HAVE THE MANPOWER TO MEET HEALTH NEEDS OF THE REFUGEES OR TO RUN THE DOROI AND TRONGA PROPERLY. PELLE SAID CONDITIONS AT MAVUDZI WERE CONSIDERABLY BETTER THAN THOSE AT DOROI AND TRONGA. MAVUDZI WAS SET UP AND RUN LIKE A SMALL COMMUNAL VILLAGE, AND IN MOST RESPECTS CONDITIONS THERE WERE FAR BETTER THAN IN MANY MOZAMBIKAN VILLAGES OF SIMILAR SIZE.

4. NEWSWEEK: BEFORE DEPARTING FOR SOUTH AFRICA ON APRIL 13, JAMES PRINGLE SPOKE TO DCM ABOUT HIS EIGHT HOUR VISIT TO DOROI. PRINGLE SAID REFUGEES WERE ONLY GETTING ONE MEAL A DAY, A PORRIDGE MADE OUT OF MAIZE MEAL AND WATER.

NO OTHER FOOD WAS AVAILABLE. ORGANIZATION AT CAMP WAS PRACTICALLY NON-EXISTENT. THIS WAS EVIDENT AT MEAL TIME WHEN PEOPLE CROWDED AND PUSHED AROUND THREE FIFTY GALLON OIL DRUMS IN WHICH FOOD WAS PREPARED AND SERVED. SANITARY AND HEALTH CONDITIONS WERE "ABYSMAL." HE SAW NUMBER-

OUS CASES OF SICKNESS AND SAID THAT LARGE NUMBER OF WOMEN HAD STIFFENED JOINTS, WHICH HE ATTRIBUTED TO PROTEIN AND VITAMIN DEFICIENCIES. PRINGLE WAS ALSO TOLD BY PEOPLE IN CAMP THAT THERE WERE TWO DEATHS RELATED TO ILLNESS TWO DAYS BEFORE HIS ARRIVAL. BECAUSE OF THE DEPLORABLE CONDITIONS AT DOROI, PRINGLE WAS TOLD THAT A SMALL BUT STEADY TRICKLE OF REGUGEES WERE RETURNING TO RHODESIA. PRINGLE DID NOT THINK CAMP WAS BEING USED AS A MILITARY TRAINING CENTER, ALTHOUGH RHODESIAN AIRCRAFT REPORTEDLY OVERFLEW THE CAMP SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK. IF GIVEN THE GO AHEAD BY HIS NEW YORK OFFICE, PRINGLE PLANS TO DO A LONG STORY ON DOROI.

5. BBC-TV CREW: A TWO-MAN BBC-TV CREW THAT VISITED THE CAMPS TOLD BRITISH EMBASSY OFFICIALS THAT DOROI WAS POORLY RUN AND IN EXTREMELY SAD SHAPE. VIRTUALLY EVERY ASPECT OF CAMP LIFE---FOOD, SANITATION, EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE--NEEDED TO BE DRASTICALLY IMPROVED.
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6. EMBASSY RECOMMENDATIONS: IN VIEW OF MOUNTING EVIDENCE ABOUT SERIOUS NEEDS WHICH EXIST IN THE REFUGEE CAMPS, PARTICULARLY DOROI, EMBASSY RENEWS ITS RECOMMENDATIONS (MAPUTO 099)

THAT DEPARTMENT GIVE URGENT CONSIDERATION TO AUGMENTING ITS CONTRIBUTION TO UNHCR FOR HELP FOR ZIMBABWEAN REGUEES IN MOZAMBIQUE. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY UNHCR REP THAT SWEDISH CONTRIBUTION OF 1.2 MILLION TO MOZAMBIQUE FOR ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES WILL BE USED TO REIMBURSE MOZAMBIQUE GOVERNMENT FOR ITS PREVIOUS EXPENDITURES ON BEHALF OF REFUGEES AND TO MAKE LOCAL PRUCHASES OF FOOD, ON BASIS OF LATEST INFORMATION WE HAVE RECEIVED WE ANTICIPATE THAT FINANCIAL AND FOOD NEEDS IN THE CAMPS WILL REMAIN GREAT. WE RECOMMEND THAT DEPARTMENT ALSO EXPLORE FEASIBILITY OF A DIRECT PL480 TITLE II EMERGENCY FOOD AID CONTRIBUTION.
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